

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information acquisition method for an information processing apparatus which acquires attribute information related to image data of images  
5 stored in an external device, comprising:

detecting whether the information processing apparatus is connected to the external device so that they can communicate with each other; and

- acquiring partial information of the attribute  
10 information for each of the images when the information processing apparatus is connected to the external device.

2. The information acquisition method according to  
15 claim 1, wherein the partial information of the attribute information requires relatively short periods of time for information acquisition processing of the information processing apparatus.

- 20 3. The information acquisition method according to claim 1, further comprising:

in response to a request for an image by the information processing apparatus, acquiring from the external device the attribute information of the  
25 requested image except for the previously acquired partial information of the attribute information.

4. An information processing method for an image recording apparatus which generates attribute information related to image data of stored images, comprising:

5 detecting whether the image recording apparatus is connected to an external device so that they can communicate with each other;

generating partial information of the attribute information for each of the images when the image  
10 recording apparatus is connected to the external device; and

transmitting the generated partial information of the attribute information to the external device.

15 5. The information processing method according to claim 4, wherein the partial information of the attribute information requires relatively short periods of time for information acquisition processing of the external device among the attribute information.

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6. The information processing method according to claim 4, further comprising:

in response to a request for an image by the external device, generating the attribute information  
25 of the requested image except for the previously generated partial information of the attribute information; and

transmitting the generated attribute information  
to the external device.

7. An information processing apparatus comprising:

5 a connection unit that is connectable to an  
external device so to be communicated therewith; and  
an attribute information acquisition unit that  
acquires attribute information related to image data of  
images recorded in the external device,

10 wherein said attribute information acquisition  
unit acquires from the external device partial  
information of the attribute information for each of  
the images when the information processing apparatus is  
connected to the external device.

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8. The information processing apparatus according to  
claim 7, wherein the partial information of the  
attribute information requires relatively short periods  
of time for information acquisition processing of the  
20 information processing apparatus among the attribute  
information.

9. The information processing apparatus according to  
claim 7, wherein, in response to a request for an image  
25 by the information processing apparatus, said attribute  
information acquisition unit acquires from the external  
device the attribute information of the requested image

except for the previously acquired partial information of the attribute information.

10. An image recording apparatus comprising:

5        an attribute information generation unit that generates attribute information related to image data of recorded images; and

         a transmission unit that transmits the attribute information generated by said attribute information  
10 generation unit to an external device, wherein  
         when the image recording apparatus is connected to the external device so that they can communicate with each other, the attribute information generation unit generates partial information of the attribute  
15 information for each of the images, and the transmission unit transmits the generated partial information to the external device.

11. The image recording apparatus according to claim  
20 10, wherein the partial information of the attribute information requires relatively short periods of time for information acquisition processing of the external device.

25 12. The image recording apparatus according to claim 10, wherein, in response to a request for an image by the external device, said attribute information

generation unit generates the attribute information of the requested image except for the previously acquired partial information of the attribute information, and said transmission unit transmits to the external device  
5 the generated attribute information except for the previously generated partial information of the attribute information.

13. An information processing method for a digital  
10 imaging system having a digital image generating apparatus and an information processing apparatus, the digital image generating apparatus storing image data of a plurality of generated images as image files in a storage device, said method comprising:

15 the image processing apparatus managing a plurality of pieces of attribute information contained in object information related to each of the image files in the digital image generating apparatus in two or more categories; and

20 the image processing apparatus creating for each of the image files, an object only containing information in a part of the categories out of the plurality of pieces of attribute information when the digital image generating apparatus is connected to the  
25 information processing apparatus.

14. The information processing method according to claim 13, wherein,

when an application running on the information processing apparatus requires overall image data of an image, the digital image generating apparatus generates attribute information of the required image except for the attribute information in the part of the categories generated at the time of the connection between the information processing apparatus and the digital image generating apparatus, and

the information processing apparatus acquires the generated attribute information, and then stores and manages the generated attribute information in the object created at the time of the connection.

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15. The information processing method according to claim 13, wherein the information in the part of the categories of the attribute information is acquired from management information held by a file system in the digital image generating apparatus.

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16. The information processing method according to claim 14, wherein the attribute information except for the information in the part of the categories of the attribute information contains data in a file stored in the digital image generating apparatus.

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17. A storage medium having stored therein a program  
for causing a computer to execute the information  
acquisition method according to claim 1.

5 18. A storage medium having stored therein a program  
for causing a computer to execute the information  
processing method according to claim 4.

10 19. A storage medium having stored therein a program  
for causing a computer to execute the information  
processing method according to claim 13.